DOI: 10.71317/jgst.2.7.2026.223
Journal of Global Social Transformation
Journal homepage: https://rjsaonline.org/index.php/JGST

Gender Equality and Higher Education in Pakistan: A Comprehensive Review of Issues of Philosophical and Global Debates

Dr. Asma Majeed[1], Dr. Ahmed Usman[2], Marrium Hassan[3]
[1] Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore
Email: Asma.majeed@kinnaird.edu.pk
[2] Professor, Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore
Email: ahmedusmaan@hotmail.com
[3] IB student, Lahore Grammar School International (LGSI)
Email: Marriumhassan888@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

May 24, 2026
Revised:
June 07, 2026
Accepted:
June 22, 2026
Available Online:
July 05, 2026

Keywords:
gender equality; higher education; Pakistan; feminism; education policy

Corresponding author:
Asma.majeed@kinnaird.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the philosophical, global, and Pakistan-specific literature on gender equality and higher education. It traces the contested philosophical foundations of the concept of equality; the evolution of higher education as an increasingly market-driven global institution; the contributions of feminist scholarship to debates on gender and education; the barriers to access and success that women continue to face in pursuing higher education; the state policy landscape shaping gender equality in higher education, both globally and within Pakistan; the uneven gendering of higher education under market pressure; and the phenomenon of reverse discrimination as a policy response to gender imbalance (Ali & Majeed, 2019). The review finds that gender equality in higher education in Pakistan remains largely absent at the level of formal policy, even as higher education has become an urgent market necessity for women and argues that meaningful progress requires attention not only to enrolment and access but to the underlying philosophical, structural, and cultural conditions that continue to shape women's experience of higher education in Pakistan.

Introduction

Gender equality and higher education are two of the most contested and consequential themes in contemporary Pakistani society, situated at the intersection of philosophy, policy, market forces, and culture. This review draws together the philosophical, global, and Pakistan-specific literature on the subject to trace how equality has been conceived, how higher education has evolved as a market-driven institution, how feminist scholarship has advanced and complicated the discourse on gender in education, and how access, state policy, and market forces jointly determine whether gender equality in higher education is realized in practice or remains largely aspirational.

The review is organized thematically: the philosophical debates underlying equality and education; the global evolution of higher education as a policy and market domain; feminist contributions to the gender-and-education discourse; questions of access and success; the state policy landscape globally and in Pakistan; the uneven gendering of higher education under market pressure; and reverse discrimination as a policy response to gender imbalance. The central tension that emerges is that gender equality in higher education in Pakistan remains largely absent at the policy level, even as higher education itself has become an urgent market necessity, creating new forms of inequality even as it promises to resolve old ones.

The question is:

How can we understand the contested debates of gender equality and higher education in Pakistan?

Philosophical Debates of Equality and Education

Aristotle held the conviction that equality is a political matter limited to the internal affairs of the state (Aristotle, 1932). The debate has since extended from politics to income, representation, resources, gender, and employment.There are three spectrums: spectrum A holds that humans are equal in intrinsic nature (Schuppert, 2016); spectrum B that all humans should be treated equally as a moral good (Arstein-Kerslake & Flynn, 2016); spectrum C that equality is desirable for a just and fair society (Breckinridge, 1914). Every idea of equality is thus a specific idea, with its own morality and politics.

Hobbes argued that despite differences in wealth and status, all should be bound by equal legal obligation (Hobbes, 1651), an equality before the law that is just for all (Barry, 1989). A second idea holds that all persons deserve equal dignity and respect on moral grounds (Kymlicka, 1990), though this offers no clear social order and leaves open what exactly should be equalized in public policy. Equal distribution of income has been criticized on the grounds that rational persons maximize their own interests rather than sacrifice for the poor (Rawls, 1972), while institutional, cultural, and religious identities further complicate equality by giving people hierarchical, subjective self-understandings (Nagel, 1991). This tension produces the idea of equality of opportunity: mere economic inequality may be rational, but inequality across a whole life is not (Walzer, 1983), a principle underlying equal opportunity in health and education. The Rawlsian principle permits partail inequality where productivity and income rise together (Rawls, 1972), while merit-based arguments — that the most meritorious deserve opportunity — are themselves attacked as detrimental to justice (Young, 1990), and difference-based arguments hold that uniform equality ignores real social diversity.

Philosophical debates on education concern its purpose, methods, and curriculum (McWilliams, 2016). Existentialists emphasize individual freedom as the aim of curriculum; Marxists see imposed structures as capitalistic and call for the abandonment of hierarchies (Hammersley, 2016); feminists argue curriculum should be gender sensitive. Some hold that education should develop the mind and transmit generational heritage (Peters, 1966), while Dewey favored experimentation over transmission, arguing education should respect children's interests and develop critical thinking (Dewey, 1916). Hirst emphasized the development of a rational mind (Hirst, 1983), while Scheffler argued classrooms should involve children's own views rather than simply supplying right answers (Scheffler, 1965). Ennis treats critical thinking as the correct assessment of statements and beliefs (Ennis, 1962), though others argue it cannot be taught as a generalizable skill given the diversity of subjects (McPeck, 1990); Paul holds that mastery of critical skills enables criticism of others' views (Paul, 1982), while Siegel, rejecting relativism, ties critical thinking to rational assessment (Siegel, 1988).

Higher Education: Policies, Issues, and the Global Scenario

Contemporary higher education is among the important revolutions in modern history, reshaping occupations, identities, and gender relations since its emergence in Europe and America, with effects deepening across the globe (Florida, 2005). Pakistan's own higher education system was built on colonial-era foundations (Scott, 2010), and its expansion has accelerated with democracy and feminism. New occupational environments demand qualifications only higher education can meet (Villarreal, 2016), and funding has shifted from public to private, consumer-dependent models (CER, 2015).

This expansion has changed the profile expected of university leadership, demanding new strategic, communication, and pro-change skills (Marshall, 2010; Stevenson & Howlett, 2007), while placing new pressures on female employees as higher education becomes an economic obligation rather than a choice, current policy remaining ill-equipped to manage the resulting complexity (Enders, 2010). The university has become an intermediate link between society, market, and finance, reinforcing market structures by meeting market demand (Scott, 2010). Commercialization has produced new productivity standards that have, in turn, generated debate over gender: some studies suggest men are more productive in academia because women are underrepresented in senior, higher-productivity ranks (Kyvik, 2010), while others attribute lower research output to the demands of pregnancy, maternity leave, and domestic responsibility (Steinfeld, 2015; Kasper & Mulder, 2015), within academic environments that often remain male-dominated (Buber-Ennser & Skirbekk, 2016).

The relationship among state, market, and university is complex: the state retains ultimate capacity to shape the market (Olsen & Peters, 2005), yet current higher education policy is largely driven by capitalistic ideology that favors market freedom over detailed state input, judging universities chiefly on output (Yokoyama & Meek, 2010; Kyvik, 2010). Feminist critiques of this system hold that women's concerns have been neglected in scientific research (Alcoff, 1987; Alcoff & Potter, 1993), that research is conceptualized on androcentric assumptions (Eichler, 1988), and that positivistic approaches convert subjects into objects and numbers (Harding, 1986), calling instead for research methods that emphasize reflexivity and women's lived experience (Harding, 1991; Fonow & Cook, 1991).

Feminism and Gender Equality in Education

Feminism has been a powerful academic and political movement since the late eighteenth century. Mary Wollstonecraft, writing against the view that women should not be formally educated, argued that denying women education harmed both family life and women's own development, since women were equally capable of rationality and wisdom if permitted to cultivate it (Moore & Bruder, 2005). Utilitarian philosophers argued for equal rights on grounds of maximizing general happiness, rejecting claims of essential physiological difference (Deb, 2016), while Harriet Taylor held that non-biological differences between men and women were products of social construction rather than nature (Min, 2016). Simone de Beauvoir later argued that popular conceptions of womanhood were themselves culturally imposed (Beauvoir, 1974), and in the twentieth century Kate Millett challenged institutional patriarchy directly, linking personal development to social structure (Millett, 1970), while Shulamith Firestone located women's oppression in childbearing itself (Moore & Bruder, 2005).

Despite this long struggle, gender equality in education remains contested (Motta, Fominaya, Eschle, & Cox, 2011) and central to debates on development and empowerment (Arnot & Fennell, 2008). UNESCO measures gender equality in education chiefly through numerical parity (UNESCO, 2010), while a second framework examines curriculum content, teacher assumptions, and perceived subject suitability by gender (Unterhalter, 2012). The UDHR guarantees free, compulsory education only at the fundamental level, leaving higher education merely 'equally accessible… on the basis of merit' — a standard that demonstrates no real commitment to gender equality in higher education, and one further weakened by parents' right to decide on their children's education (Brodkin, 2014); even CEDAW does not specify the level of education to which women are entitled, leaving international frameworks only partially equipped to address the issue (Unterhalter, 2008).

Religion remains a central and contested factor in these debates. Some scholars view religious institutions as a major source of gender discrimination (Sakallı-Uğurlu & Uğurlu, 2016) and see Islam's influence on policymaking as harmful to women's empowerment in Muslim-majority societies (Othman, 2006), while Muslim feminists argue instead that Islamic law requires reinterpretation for contemporary conditions (Terman, 2016), challenging interpretations that legitimize male domination (Smith, 2016; Burstein, 2013; Mernissi, 1996) and seeking freedom from, within, and of religion (Othman, 2006). Because gender equality can be defined in such divergent ways, some scholars have called it an 'empty concept' (Westen, 1982), and contemporary universal-rights frameworks, often indifferent to local culture and religion (Talbott, 2005), have led others to reject the very idea of universal equality (Wiles, 2007).

Higher Education: Access and Success

Higher education is neither compulsory nor free, and access becomes sharply individualistic once students move beyond secondary school; many families consider it rational to support education only to the secondary level. Higher education promises high returns within a knowledge-based economy but demands considerable resources (Keeling & Hersh, 2016), placing it out of reach for lower-income families given its cost and duration (Callender, 2016), compounded by unstable job markets that discourage investment even where formal opportunity is equal (Gerstein & Friedman, 2016).

Financial priority is frequently given to sons: education is increasingly something to be purchased rather than simply gained (Sennett, 2006), and calculating parents may invest preferentially in male children seen as better positioned in a male-dominated labor market (Eydoux, 2016), particularly since daughters will eventually leave the household upon marriage. In the Pakistani context specifically, daughters can be regarded as a double financial burden given dowry and marriage costs; many girls are married by the age of eighteen, before higher education is realistically possible, and in-laws frequently discourage further study thereafter. Even where higher education is obtained, it is no guarantee of employment (Barsoum, 2002): employers seeking maximal efficiency often resist hiring mothers, given the costs of maternity leave and childcare and assumptions about availability for shift work (Baral, 2016).

A further barrier lies in the pace of economic change itself: skills taught in higher education can become obsolete quickly, requiring costly retraining (Bagilhole, 2005; Barnard, Hassan, Bagilhole, & Dainty, 2012), within labor markets that draw no distinction between mother and worker and expect constant availability (Skard, 2009). Feminist scholars caution that women's empowerment through employment has real limits, given how gender discrimination and poverty compound in developing economies (Kabeer, 2005) and how development discourse tends to reduce complex lives to narrow economic terms (Klasen, 2006). At the same time, higher education is associated with lower fertility, greater autonomy, and stronger economic contribution among women (Chaudhry, 2007; Bloom, Canning, Fink, & Finlay, 2009), functioning as an important resource for pursuing personal goals within market structures (Reimer & Pollak, 2010) and yielding real, if uneven, returns on investment in daughters' education (Murphy, 2009; Doepke & Tertilt, 2009) — one reason universities increasingly compete for female students even at some cost to quality standards (Brink & Stobbe, 2014).

State Policies in Higher Education

Local political and religious culture continues to shape attitudes toward women's education even as globalization erodes the salience of national boundaries, entangling states in new transnational tensions (Odin & Manicas, 2004) that press for the erosion of national identity through the reconstruction of higher education (Colclough, 2006). Feminist pressure has pushed gender mainstreaming to the center of higher education policy (Rai, 2003; Subrahmanian, 2005), understood as the development of capabilities and freedoms for men and women alike (Unterhalter, 2008), even as traditional gender-role perceptions continue to shape career and education choices (Davis & Greenstein, 2009) and gender equality in higher education shows no clear, independent impact on economic development (Brummet, 2008).

Pakistan's education system remains diverse and still evolving, particularly at the higher level (Khalid & Khan, 2006; Saeed, 2007). Education is not free even at the primary level (Dean, 2007), leaving many children outside the system entirely (Government of Pakistan, 2009); a significant private sector has emerged alongside religious seminaries, some of which now incorporate subjects such as computer science, English, and mathematics (Government of Pakistan, 2005). Given this cultural and religious diversity, gender equality in higher education remains an aspiration rather than an achievement (Farah & Shera, 2007), with the system still lacking robust productivity measures (Iqbal, Ali, & Pirzada, 2012), and access varying sharply between urban and rural women (Jayaweera, 1997).

Education is widely treated as the single most critical factor in economic development (Khilji, 2005; Raja, 2005), essential to capital accumulation and workforce readiness (Kim & Terada-Hagiwara, 2010), poverty reduction (Chaudhry & Rahman, 2009), and reduced income inequality (Danacica, Belascu, & Llie, 2010). Yet social policy in Pakistan has repeatedly fallen short of its promise of women's empowerment (Rasheed, 2004), a gap requiring sustained enforcement rather than rhetorical commitment alone (Sandhu, 2012). National statistics illustrate the scale of the gap: women, roughly 48 percent of the population, hold only 0.3 percent of managerial posts against 2.1 percent for men, occupy just 17 percent of National Assembly seats, and hold no seats at all in the Federal Cabinet (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2014); literacy stands at 71 percent for men against 48 percent for women, only six of seventy-nine public universities are exclusively for women, and women hold barely a third of university teaching posts nationally — figures that show even numerical gender equality in higher education remains unrealized in Pakistan.

Unevenly Gendered Higher Education and the Market

Universities worldwide are working to align their programs with job-market demands (Billett, 2010), a shift driven partly by urbanization and migration (Duke, 2010), though university-level gender parity should not be mistaken for gender equality overall, since universities are not the sole site of higher education (Slowey, 2010). Curricula have been revised largely along economic lines, with education increasingly treated as a commercial service (Mok, 2010) and many developing-country institutions unable to match the standards of wealthier systems (Kimura-Walsh, 2010), even as international lenders scale back support for higher education citing low returns (Rivers, Rivers, & Hazell, 2016).

Although women have come to outnumber men in universities globally (Morley, 2010), this growth is unevenly distributed across disciplines: women remain a minority in engineering and technology, fields widely perceived as more suited to men on grounds of physical or aptitude assumptions (Bagilhole, 2005; Alpay, Ahearn, Graham, & Bull, 2008), reinforced in turn by patterns of parental support for particular subjects (Godfroy-Genin, 2009). For many, higher education functions less as a right than a career-oriented investment, and female students often remain wary of a male-dominated job market (Acker, 2012); few women reach top managerial ranks (Singh, 2008), often passed over amid informal office politics (Ahmed, 2010) and unfamiliar with the competitive tactics of a fiercely contested labor market (Morley, 2013).

Universities increasingly favor the language of 'leadership' over 'management' in an effort to address gender imbalance (Northouse, 2007; O'Reilly & Reed, 2011), yet women's skills continue to be harnessed for cost-efficient institutional ends while remaining largely absent from real positions of influence (Blannford, Brill, Neave, & Roberts, 2011), concentrated instead in communication and human-resource roles rather than senior leadership (Guillaume & Pochic, 2009) — a pattern that holds in Pakistan as elsewhere (Morley, 2013). Caregiving demands frequently clash with workplace expectations (Lynch, Baker, & Lyons, 2009), leaving women to negotiate constantly between professional and domestic roles (Runte & Mills, 2004; Adu-Yeboah & Forde, 2011), often at real cost to career advancement (Bardoel, Drago, Cooper, & Colbeck, 2011); notably, even women with limited family responsibilities remain largely absent from senior academic posts, partly because they continue to be seen as risky appointments for sensitive roles (Billing, 2011; Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010).

Numerical parity alone is not a reliable indicator of gender equality, since misogynistic assumptions can persist regardless of headcount; in Pakistan, femininity is often perceived as incompatible with rationality and authority (Shah, 2001), and organizations that expect near-constant availability continue to exclude women unwilling to sacrifice family responsibilities

(Devine, Grummell, & Lynch, 2011) — a pattern some argue calls for a fundamentally gender-free approach to higher education (Morley, 2013). More broadly, education has slipped down the global development agenda as agencies redirect funding toward primary schooling, judged to offer higher returns (Mercer, 2014; Colclough, Kingdon, & Patrinos, 2010), with the World Bank now a dominant force in education financing, operating on largely capitalistic principles that favor competition and private institutions (Marshall, 2008; Mundy & Verger, 2015; Roberston, 2009); Pakistan remains among its largest education borrowers (Mundy & Verger, 2015), yet no Pakistani university currently appears in world rankings (Millot, 2015).

Reverse Discrimination and Endangered Gendering

States seeking to eliminate gender discrimination sometimes adopt reverse discrimination — a deliberate bias toward women in employment policy, preferring female candidates among comparably qualified applicants (Warburton, 1999). The quota system remains a legal feature of Pakistan's women's empowerment policy, offering a plausible short-term accelerant toward equality whose longer-term effectiveness remains uncertain; beneficiaries can become psychologically conditioned to see themselves as either discriminated against or unfairly favored, and the policy is not always well received by those who enter through open merit (Fugère, 2016), leaving some women who benefit from it more vulnerable in open competition.

The professionalization and expansion of knowledge fields has reshaped gender balance in higher education (OECD, 2010) alongside tightening ties between knowledge and economy; higher education and professional qualification have become prerequisites for entry into new job markets, and women's choices are increasingly driven by these market requirements (Lörz, Schindler, & Walter, 2011) rather than family guidance, even as subject choice remains persistently gendered (Smyth & Steinmetz, 2008). Lacking adequate institutional or peer counseling, many women fall back on earlier, gendered perceptions of suitable fields — a pattern that holds globally (Charles & Bradley, 2009) and interacts closely with local job-market conditions (Reimer & Pollak, 2010), since market and economic principles generally presuppose a gender-neutral individual that gender mainstreaming has done little to disturb.

Women continue to gravitate toward the arts, humanities, and social sciences (Barone, 2011), a pattern shaped by dominant expectations that portray women as especially suited to caring, communicative roles (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2004), while technical and scientific fields are often perceived as incompatible with domestic responsibility (Morgan, 1992) and are chosen accordingly on grounds of comparative advantage (Werfhorst, Sullivan, & Cheung, 2003). Because such fields typically demand sustained, uninterrupted commitment, and because men remain comparatively freer of childcare responsibility, meaningful equality is unlikely without a broader reconstruction of underlying gender roles.

Pakistan remains formally committed to women's empowerment through higher education (Malik, 2005), even as prevailing policy discourse often overlooks how existing gender-power imbalances shape access to education in the first place; entry into higher education remains strongly conditioned by family socioeconomic status, an issue current policy does not meaningfully address. State patronage has become increasingly necessary given persistent, change-resistant patriarchal structures (Malik & Courtney, 2011), even as such top-down enforcement neglects softer strategies for social change and governance structures remain ill-suited to enforcement absent voluntary societal participation. This resistance is powerful enough that formal legislation for women's empowerment often proves largely ineffective in practice (Majeed et al, 2025; Majeed et al, 2026), rooted in a patriarchy that is itself embedded in religious and ideological perception (Mehdi, 2004) and that legitimizes male power in ways that render discrimination oppressive across many domains of women's lives (Madhani, 2007) — discrimination that, by some measures, remains higher in Pakistan than elsewhere in South Asia (UNICEF, 2006), leaving higher education among the few available avenues for Pakistani women seeking to overcome it.

Conclusion

Gender equality and higher education in Pakistan are best understood not as settled achievements but as constantly shifting phenomena. The philosophical literature shows equality itself to be a deeply contested concept, a fact that carries directly into education policy, where confusion over what equality requires undermines the coherence of specific interventions. Globally, higher education has evolved into an increasingly market-driven institution, reshaping gender dynamics within universities in ways that are not straightforwardly positive for women, even as feminist scholarship has substantially expanded the terms on which gender and education can be discussed and challenged.

For Pakistan specifically, gender equality in higher education remains largely absent at the level of formal policy, even as higher education itself has become an urgent response to a changing job market. Access continues to be shaped by social, economic, and cultural conditions that current policy does not adequately address, and the state's efforts to harmonize local practice with international standards remain only partially reconciled with Pakistan's socio-religious realities. Reverse discrimination policies such as quotas offer one visible, if contested, response to this gap, but the literature suggests that

numerical parity alone is unlikely to constitute genuine gender equality so long as the underlying market, familial, and cultural structures shaping women's access to — and experience within — higher education remain largely unreformed. Meaningful progress will require sustained attention to the philosophical clarity of the concept itself, the structural relationship between higher education and the labor market, the specific barriers women face in accessing and succeeding within higher education, and the cultural and religious contexts within which any policy intervention must ultimately operate.

References

1. Acker, S. (2012). Chairing and Caring: Gendered Dimensions of Leadership in Academe. Gender and Education, 24(4), 411-28.
2. Ali, S., & Majeed, A. (2018). Problems and possibilities in reconciling Islam and gender equality policies in Pakistan. Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 8(1), 93–104. https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.81.07
3. Adu-Yeboah, C., & Forde, L. D. (2011). Returning to Study in Higher Education in Ghana: Experiences of Mature Undergraduate Women. Research in Comparative and International Education, 6(4), 400-14.
4. Ahmed, S. (2010). The Promise of Happiness. Duke University Press.
5. Alcoff, L. (1987). Justifying Feminist Social Science. Hypatia, 2, 107-27.
6. Aristotle. (1932). The Politics. (H. Rackham, Trans.) Harvard University Press.
7. Arnot, M., & Fennell, S. (2008). (Re)visiting education and development agendas: Contemporary gender research. In S. Fennell, & M. Arnot (Eds.), Gender Education and Equality in Global Context: Conceptual frameworks and policy perspectives (pp. 1-15). Routledge.
8. Bardoel, E., Drago, R., Cooper, B., & Colbeck, C. (2011). Bias avoidance: Cross-cultural differences in the US and Australian academies. Gender, Work and Organization, 18(S1), 157-179.
9. Barnard, S., Hassan, T., Bagilhole, B., & Dainty, A. (2012). 'They're not girly girls': an exploration of quantitative and qualitative data on engineering and gender in higher education. European Journal of Engineering Education, 37(2), 193-204.
10. Barone, C. (2011). Some things never change. Gender segregation in higher education across eight nations and three decades. Sociology of Education, 84(2), 157-176.
11. Barry, B. (1989). Theories of Justice. Harvester Wheatsheaf.
12. Barsoum, G. (2002). The Employment Crisis of Female Graduates in Egypt: An Ethnographic Account. Cairo Papers in Society Science, 25(3).
13. Beauvoir, S. d. (1974). The Second Sex. (H. Parshley, Trans.) Vintage Books.
14. Billett, S. (2010). Workplace Learning Frameworks. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 58-63). Elsevier.
15. Billing, Y. (2011). Are women in management victims of the phantom of the male norm? Gender, Work and Organization, 18(3), 298-317.
16. Blannford, E., Brill, C., Neave, S., & Roberts, A. (2011). Equality in Higher Education: Statistical Report 2011. HESA-Equality Challenge Unit.
17. Bloom, D., Canning, D., Fink, G., & Finlay, J. (2009). Fertility, Female Labor Force Participation and the Demographic Dividend. Journal of Economic Growth, 14(2), 79-101.
18. Breckinridge, S. (1914). Political Equality for Women and Women's Wages. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 56, 122-133.
19. Brink, M. V., & Stobbe, L. (2014). The support paradox: Overcoming dilemas in gender equality programs. Scandinavian Journal of Management, 30, 163-174.

20. Brummet, Q. (2008). The Effect of Gender Inequality on Growth: A Cross-Country Empirical Study. Retrieved February 19, 2013, from http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/econ_honproj/88

21. Buber-Ennser, I., & Skirbekk, V. (2016). Researchers, religion and childlessness. . Journal of biosocial science, 48(3), 391-405.

22. Burstein, J. (2013). Like Windows in the Wall: Four Documentaries by Israeli Women. Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues, 25, 129-146.

23. Charles, M., & Bradley, K. (2009). Indulging our gendered selves? Sex segregation by field of study in 44 countries. American Journal of Sociology, 114(4), 924-76.

24. Chaudhry, I. S. (2007). Gender Inequality in Education and Economic Growth: Case Study of Pakistan. Pakistan Horizon, 60(4), 81-91.

25. Chaudhry, I., & Rahman, S. (2009). The impact of gender inequality in education on rural poverty in Pakistan: An empirical analysis. European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences, 15, 174-188.

26. Colclough, C. (2006, October 31). Wider picture: globalisation and higher education. paper deliverd at Case-Study Symposium on African Development: The Case of North Kenya. City University.

27. Davis, S. N., & Greenstein, T. N. (2009). Gender Ideology: Components, Predictors, and Consequences. Annual Review of Sociology, 35, 87-105.

28. Dean, B. (2007). The state of civic education in Pakistan. Agha Khan University.

29. Deb, B. (2016). Cutting across Imperial Feminisms toward Transnational Feminist Solidarities. Meridians, 13(2), 164-188.

30. Devine, D., Grummell, B., & Lynch, K. (2011). Crafting the elastic self? Gender and identities in senior appointments in Irish education. Gender, Work and Organization, 18(6), 631-49.

31. Dewey, J. (1916). Democracy and Education. Macmillan.

32. Doepke, M., & Tertilt, M. (2009). Women's Liberation: What's in it for Men? Quarterly Journal of Economics, 124, 1541-1591.

33. Duke, C. (2010). Learning Cities and Regions. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 144-149). Elsevier.

34. Eichler, M. (1988). Nonsexist Research Methods. Allen & Unwin.

35. Eydoux, A. (2016). Gender and the European Labour Market. Feminist Economics, 22(2), 202-206.

36. Farah, I., & Shera, S. (2007). Female education in Pakistan: A review. In R. Qureshi, & J. Rarieya (Eds.), Gender and education in Pakistan (pp. 3-42). Oxford University Press.

37. Florida, R. (2005). Cities and the Creative Class. Routledge.

38. Fonow, M., & Cook, J. (Eds.). (1991). Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research. Indiana University Press.

39. Fugère, M. A. (2016). Preference for the Diversity Policy Label Versus the Affirmative Action Policy Label. Social Justice Research, 29(2), 206-227.

40. Gerstein, M., & Friedman, H. H. (2016). Rethinking Higher Education: Focusing on Skills and Competencies. Psychosociological Issues in Human Resource Management, 4(2), 104-121.

41. Godfroy-Genin, A. (2009). Women's academic careers in technology: a comparative European perspective. Equal Opportunities International, 28(1), 80-97.

42. Government of Pakistan. (2005). The State of Education in Pakistan 2003-04. Ministry of Education.

43. Government of Pakistan. (2009). Draft National Education Policy 2009. Ministry of Education.

44. Guillaume, C., & Pochic, S. (2009). What Would You Sacrifice? Access to Top Management and the Work-Life Balance. Gender, Work & Organization, 16(1), 14-36.

45. Hammersley, M. (2016). An Ideological Dispute: Accusations of Marxist Bias in the Sociology of Education During the 1970s. Contemporary British History, 30(2), 242-259.

46. Harding, S. (1986). The Science Question in Feminism. Cornell University Press.

47. Harding, S. (1991). Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Cornell University Press.

48. Hirst, P. (1983). Educational Theory and Its Foundation Disciplines. Routledge.

49. Hobbes, T. (1651). Leviathan. (M. Oakeshott, Ed.) Blackwell.

50. Ibarra, H., Carter, N., & Silva, C. (2010). Why men still get more promotions than women. Harvard Business Review, 88(9), 80-85.

51. Iqbal, A., Ali, Q., & Pirzada, D. S. (2012). Productivity Measurement Issues in Education Sector of Pakistan. IEEE Global Humanitarian Technology Conference (pp. 318-402). IEEE computer society.

52. Jayaweera, S. (1997). Women, education and empowerment in Asia. Gender and Education, 9, 411-23.

53. Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender equality and women's empowerment: a critical analysis of the third Millennium Development Goal. Gender and Development, 13(1), 13-24.

54. Kasper, C., & Mulder, M. (2015). Who Helps and Why?: Cooperative Networks in Mpimbwe. Current Anthropology, 56(5), 701-732.

55. Keeling, R., & Hersh, R. (2016). We're losing our minds: Rethinking American higher education. Springer.

56. Khalid, S. M., & Khan, M. F. (2006). Pakistan: The state of education. The Muslim World, 96(2), 305-322.

57. Khilji, B. (2005). Education as a factor of human capital formation in Pakistan (1951-1998): Review. Journal of Agriculture and Social Sciences, 1(2), 180-186.

58. Kim, Y., & Terada-Hagiwara, A. (2010). A survey on the relationship between education and growth with implications for developing Asia. Asian Development Bank.

59. Kimura-Walsh, E. (2010). Globalization and Social Justice in Higher Education. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 536-541). Elsevier.

60. Klasen, S. (2006). UNDP's Gender-Related Measures: Some Conceptual Problems and Possible Solutions. Journal of Human Development, 7(2), 243-274.

61. Kymlicka, W. (1990). Contemporary Political Philosophy. Claredon Press.

62. Kyvik, S. (2010). Productivity of University Faculty Staff. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. IV, pp. 455-460). Elsevier.

63. Lynch, K., Baker, J., & Lyons, M. (2009). Affective Equality: Love, Care and Injustice. Palgrave Macmillan.

64. Lörz, M., Schindler, S., & Walter, J. G. (2011). Gender inequalities in higher education: extent, development and mechanisms of gender differences in enrolment and field of study choice. Irish Educational Studies, 30(2), 179-198.

65. Madhani, N. (2007). Career development in management at a Pakistani university: Is gender a factor? In R. Qureshi, & J. Rarieya (Eds.), Gender and Education in Pakistan (pp. 216-36). Oxford University Press.

66. Majeed, A., Baseer, A., & Wasay, S. (2025). Understanding impediments in achieving gender equality in higher education in Pakistan: Perspectives of educationists and policy makers. The Critical Review of Social Sciences Studies, 3(2), 1337–1348.

67. Majeed, A., Khawar, R., & Hamdani, A. R. (2026). Morality, ethics and objectification: A critical discourse analysis of traditional and secular arguments in contemporary Pakistani online Urdu texts. Human Arenas. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-026-00564-8

68. Majeed, A., Malik, R., & Hamdani, A. R. (2025). Discursive constructions of women's bodies: A critical discourse analysis of autonomy and empowerment in Pakistan. Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review, 9(3), 382–399. https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2025(9-III)32

69. Malik, S. (2005). Impact of higher education in understanding of social recognition in women (PhD thesis). University of Arid Agriculture.

70. Malik, S., & Courtney, K. (2011). Higher education and women's empowerment in Pakistan. Gender and Education, 23(1), 29-45.

71. McPeck, J. (1990). Teaching Critical Thinking. Routledge.

72. McWilliams, S. (2016). Teaching Political Theory as a Vocation. The Good Society, 24(2), 191-197.

73. Mehdi, T. (2004). Gender and Violence in Pakistan. The Network for Consumer Protection.

74. Mercer, M. (2014). Donor policies, practices and investment priorities in support of education, and post-2015 prospects: A review. International Journal of Educational Development, 39, 23-31.

75. Mernissi, F. (1996). Femininity as subversion: Reflections on the Muslim concept of Nushuz. In F. Mernissi (Ed.), Women's Rebellion and Islamic Memory (pp. 109-120). Zed Books.

76. Millett, K. (1970). Sexual Politics. Doubleday.

77. Millot, B. (2015). International rankings: Universities vs. higher education systems. International Journal of Educational Development, 40, 156-165.

78. Min, J. (2016). Propaganda, ideology, and democracy: A review of Jason Stanley, How Propaganda Works. The Good Society, 24(2), 210-217.

79. Mok, K. H. (2010). Curriculum and Globalization: Higher Education. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Edcuation (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 403-410). Elsevier.

80. Moore, B. N., & Bruder, K. (2005). Philosophy: The Power of Ideas (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

81. Morgan, C. (1992). College students' perceptions of barriers to women in science and engineering. Youth and Society, 24(2), 288-36.

82. Morley, L. (2010). Gender Equity in Higher Education: Challenges and Celebrations. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 629-635). Elsevier.

83. Morley, L. (2013). The rules of the game: women and the leaderist turn in higher education. Gender and Education, 25(1), 116-131.

84. Motta, S., Fominaya, C. F., Eschle, C., & Cox, L. (2011). Feminism, Women's Movements and Women in Movement. Interface, 3(2), 1-32.

85. Mundy, K., & Verger, A. (2015). The World Bank and the global governance of education in a changing world order. International Journal of Educational Development, 40, 9-18.

86. Murphy, S. (2009). Investing in Girls' Education. An Opportunity of Corporate Leadership. Cambridge, Harvard Kennedy School.

87. Nagel, T. (1991). Equality and Partiality. Oxford University Press.

88. Northouse, G. (2007). Leadership Theory and Practice (3rd ed.). Sage.

89. O'Reilly, D., & Reed, M. (2011). The grit in the oyster: Professionalism, managerialism and leaderism as discourses of UK public services modernization. Organization Studies, 32(8), 1079-101.

90. OECD. (2010). Education at a glance - OECD indicators. OECD Publications.

91. Odin, J., & Manicas, P. (Eds.). (2004). Globalization and Higher Education. University of Hawaii Press.

92. Olsen, M., & Peters, M. (2005). Neo-liberalism, higher education and the knowledge economy: From the free market to knowledge capitalism. Journal of Education Policy, 20(3), 313-345.

93. Othman, N. (2006). Muslim women and the challenge of Islamic fundamentalism/extremism: An overview of Southeast Asian Muslim women's struggle for human rights and gender equality. Women's Studies International Forum, 339-353.

94. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2014). Compendium on gender statistics of Pakistan. Statistics House, Government of Pakistan.

95. Paul, R. (1982). Teaching Critical Thinking in the "Strong" Sense. Informal Logic Newsletter, 4(2), 2-7.

96. Peters, R. (1966). Ethics in Education. Allen & Unwin.

97. Rai, S. (Ed.). (2003). Mainstreaming Gender, Democratizing the State? Manchester University Press.

98. Raja, N. (2005). Humanization of educaiton in Pakistan through Freire's concept of literacy. Asia Pacific Education Review, 1(6), 1-6.

99. Rasheed, T. (2004). Socio-Economic Dynamics in South Asia and Status of Women. Pakistan Vision, 5(1), 1-26.

100. Rawls, J. (1972). A Theory of Justice. Calredon Press.

101. Reimer, D., & Pollak, R. (2010). Educational expansion and its consequences for vertical and horizontal inequalities in access to higher education in West Germany. European Sociological Review, 26(4), 414-30.

102. Rivers, P. A., Rivers, J. K., & Hazell, V. (2016). Africa and Technology in Higher Education: Trends, Challenges, and Promise. International Journal for Innovation Education and Research, 3(5), 23-44.

103. Roberston, S. (2009). Market multilateralism, the World Bank Group and the asymmetries of globalising higher education: toward a critical political economy analysis. In R. Bassett, & A. Maldonado (Eds.), International Organization and Higher Education Policy: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally. Routledge.

104. Runte, M., & Mills, A. (2004). Paying the Toll: A Feminist Post-structural Critique of the Discourse Bridging Work and Family. Culture and Organization, 10(3), 237-49.

105. Saeed, M. (2007). Education system of Pakistan and the UK: Comparisons in context to interprovincial and inter-countries reflections. Bulletin of Education & Research, 29(2), 43-57.

106. Sakallı-Uğurlu, N., & Uğurlu, O. (2016). Predicting Attitudes Toward Gay Men with Ambivalence Toward Men, Questioning Religion, and Gender Differences. Sex Roles, 74(5-6), 195-205.

107. Sandhu, A. M. (2012). Politics of Women's Education in Pakistan: An Analysis of Government Policies and their Implementation. Pakistan Journal of History and Culture, XXXIII(1), 113-136.

108. Scheffler, I. (1965). Conditions of Knowledge: An Introduction to Epistemology and Education. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Co.

109. Schuppert, F. (2016). John Charvet: The Nature and Limits of Human Equality. Res Publica, 22(2), 243-247.

110. Scott, P. (2010). Higher Education and the Transformation of Society. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. IV, pp. 370-376). Elsevier.

111. Sennett, R. (2006). The Culture of the New Capitalism. New Haven & Yale University Press.

112. Shah, S. (2001). Tertiary colleges in Pakistan: Gender and equality. The School Field, XII(3/4), 49-70.

113. Siegel, H. (1988). Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking and Education. Routledge.

114. Singh, J. (2008). Whispers of Change: Female Staff Numbers in Commonwealth Universities. Association of Commonwealth Universities.

115. Skaalvik, S., & Skaalvik, E. (2004). Gender differences in math and verbal self-concept, performance expectations, and motivation. Sex Roles, 50(4-5), 241-52.

116. Skard, T. (2009). Gender in the Malestream - Acceptance of Women and Gender Equality in Different United Nations Organisations. Forum for Development Studies, 36(1), 155-191.

117. Slowey, M. (2010). University Adult Continuing Education: The Extra-Mural Tradition Revisited. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. I, pp. 183-190). Elsevier.

118. Smith, R. K. (2016). Textbook on international human rights. Oxford University Press.

119. Smyth, E., & Steinmetz, S. (2008). Field of study and gender segregation in European labour markets. International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 49(4-5), 257-81.

120. Steinfeld, R. (2015). Wars of the Wombs: Struggles Over Abortion Policies in Israel. Israel Studies, 20(2), 1-26.

121. Stevenson, T., & Howlett, L. (2007). The leadership succession challenge for higher education: A pilot of leadership development centres at Newcastle University. In S. Marshall (Ed.), Strategic Leadership of Change in HE: What's New? (pp. 114-128). Routledge Taylor Francis.

122. Subrahmanian, R. (2005). Gender Equality in Education: Definitions and Measurements. International Journal of Educational Development, 25(4), 395-407.

123. Talbott, W. (2005). Which Rights Should be Universal? Oxford University Press.

124. Terman, R. (2016). Islamophobia, Feminism and the Politics of Critique. Theory, Culture & Society, 33(2), 77-102.

125. UNESCO. (2010). Education for All Global Monitoring Report: Reaching the Marginalized. Oxford University Press.

126. UNICEF. (2006). The state of world's children (South Asian ed). UNICEF.

127. Unterhalter, E. (2008). Global Values and Gender Equality in Education: Needs, Rights and Capabilities. In S. Fennell, & M. Arnot (Eds.), Gender Education and Equality in a Global Context: Conceptual framework and policy perspectives (pp. 19-34). Routledge.

128. Unterhalter, E. (2012). Mutable Meanings: Gender Equality in Education and International Rights Frameworks. The Equal Rights Review, 8, 67-84.

129. Villarreal, A. (2016). The Education-Occupation Mismatch of International and Internal Migrants in Mexico, 2005–2012. Demography, 1-19.

130. Walzer, M. (1983). Spheres of Justice. Martin Roberston.

131. Werfhorst, H. v., sullivan, A., & Cheung, S. (2003). Social class, ability and choice of subject in secondary and tertiary education in Britian. British Educational Research Journal, 29(1), 41-62.

132. Westen, P. (1982). The Empty Idea of Equality. Harvard Law Review, 95, 537-42.

133. Wiles, E. (2007). Headscarves, Human Rights, and Harmonious Multicultural Society: Implications of the French Ban for Interpretations of Equality. Law & Society Review, 41(3), 699-735.

134. Yokoyama, K., & Meek, V. (2010). Steering of Higher Education System - The Role of the State. In P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), International Encyclopedia of Education (3rd ed., Vol. IV, pp. 554-8). Elsevier.

135. Young, I. (1990). Justice and the Politics of Difference. Princeton University Press.

2026 by the authors; Journal of Global Social Transformation (JGST). This is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).